Newspapers by ancestry
https://www.newspapers.com/image/427043061/

Downloaded on Feb 7, 2026

Jitec stock plunges after CEO steps aside

DON MACDONALD
The Gazette

Investors laid a beating on **Jitec Inc.** stock yesterday in reaction to news that its chief executive officer has temporarily stepped down after being banned from trading company shares.

Jitec shares lost 36 per cent in the wake of Benoit Laliberté's decision to withdraw from the Nuns' Island network-computing firm.

Laliberté was hit with a Quebec Securities Commission cease-trading order on Friday. The stock closed yesterday at $1.45, down 83 cents.

Jitec hit a high of $11.65 on Aug. 10 after going public on the Montreal Exchange on July 26.

The board of directors said during the weekend that Laliberté, 28, had temporarily stepped down from his executive duties and his seat on the board.

He intends to appear before a QSC hearing on Friday to contest the trading ban and commission allegations against him.

On Friday, the QSC said Laliberté had aggressively traded and transferred Jitec stock, often not reporting the transactions to the commission as required by insider-trading laws.

He traded hundreds of thousands of Jitec shares through five brokerage accounts he opened, the commission said.

As well, he transferred 3.5 million Jitec shares into four accounts opened by a numbered company whose only director is a close friend. At least 1.2 million shares were traded in these accounts and Laliberté personally traded Jitec shares in at least two of them, the QSC says.

PROTECTING INVESTORS: QSC

As well, he made unreported transfers of millions of Jitec shares to 35 individuals or companies, the commission said.

The QSC said it had banned Laliberté from trading in Jitec stock to protect investors from "abusive, unfair and fraudulent activities."

Jean Lorrain, the QSC's director of compliance and enforcement, has said Laliberté's trading was "completely inappropriate."

Lorrain said that activity had been artificially maintained in the stock and that the commission staff concludes that Laliberté's trading had the effect of moving the share price higher.

Among the allegations that Laliberté intends to contest this week is that he failed to submit his insider-trading reports for transactions executed between Sept. 13 and Oct. 31, 2000, he said in a statement.

Laliberté maintains that all his insider-trading reports have been submitted to the QSC.

Laliberté, who began his entrepreneurial career at 14, is Jitec's founder and by far the largest shareholder with just under 39 million shares.

Jitec leases to small and medium-size companies its stripped-down computer terminals that are connected to powerful servers at centralized operation centres. This allows firms to access software, high-speed Internet service and tech support for $49.95 a month.

Michel Brown, vice-president (operations), will assume Laliberté's duties at Jitec during his absence.

The QSC's investigation into manipulation of the stock is continuing.

Industrial real estate undergoes a rebound

MARY LAMEY
The Gazette

Montreal's industrial real-estate sector, an underperformer for most of a decade, is showing new signs of vigour. Rents are up, the vacancy rate is down and speculative construction is beginning to take off.

Just how healthy the industry is depends on who you ask. A recent survey by CB Richard Ellis, a real-estate-services company, pegs the vacancy rate at 2.4 per cent, down from just more than 4 per cent a year earlier.

"If we look back over the last four or five years, it was just too expensive for developers to build. The kinds of rents they could expect to get would not justify new construction," said Ron Panneton, research director with CB Richard Ellis.

That's changed. The region's booming biotech, aerospace and high-tech sectors are looking for newer installations. They aren't finding what they want within the existing building stock. A handful of speculative developments are going up, with most construction taking place in Laval or the West Island.

The **Olymbec** group of companies, which rode out the rough recession years of the '90s by snapping up and retrofitting old warehousing and other industrial buildings, is betting that there's room for new construction. Olymbec has bought 1.5 million square feet of land off Sources Blvd. in Point Claire and is developing two industrial-grade buildings, totaling 120,000 square feet of space. The project is scheduled for completion in January. The company plans to add other industrial and industrial/office buildings over the next three years. It is going ahead without a single signed lease.

"The market is at an all-time high," said Richard Stern, Olymbec's administrator. "With the vacancy rate projected to hit 2 per cent next year, the time for new construction is right."

In the industrial sector, the market is considered balanced, favouring neither tenants nor owners, when the vacancy rate is 5 per cent, said Panneton.

Louis Burgos, a senior vice-president with Royal LePage Inc., agreed that the supply is tightening, but disputed the Ellis figure. He placed the vacancy rate at just under 5 per cent, but agreed that the space available at the higher end of the market is tough to come by. The stock of "usable inventory," of the kind demanded by high-tech firms, stands at about 3 per cent, Burgos said.

"Tenants who want a new environment, like the biotech companies, are building for themselves," he added. "Those companies that are just looking for warehousing are going to find what they need."

Any time the vacancy rate falls, rents are bound to move up. That is the case in Montreal, where average rents hit $4.92 a square foot at mid-year, up from $4.25 a year earlier, according to the Ellis survey. Montreal remains a bargain compared with other major Canadian centres. In Vancouver, rents average $6.50 a square foot, in Ottawa, it's $5.50 and in Toronto, it's $5.35. Ellis projects that Montreal rents will increase by 15 per cent over the next year.

Stern of Olymbec concurred, saying that in some cases tenants coming out of a three-year rent cycle are coming to grips with 50-per-cent increases. He expects to charge $6 a square foot, plus heating, in his new Point Claire project.

Burgos of Royal LePage is not convinced that Montreal is about to see a spate of speculative construction. For one thing, the banks are still smarting after the real-estate crash of the '90s.

"You'll have to convince them first," he said. "The market has not reached the overheated point where people are willing to throw money around on real estate."

As for Stern, he's got the backing of the **Caisse de Dépôt et Placement du Québec.**

EARNINGS

Microcell's losses deepen

Microcell Telecommunications, known for its Fido digital cell phone system, reported yesterday a deeper loss of $114.15 million for the third quarter, despite sharply higher revenue.

The loss amounted to $1.74 a share and compared with $101.29 million or $1.82 a share a year earlier.

Over the first three quarters, however, the loss was $105.54 million, an improvement over a $297.8-million loss in the year-ago period.

Third-quarter revenue was $112.8 million, an increase of 62 per cent from a year ago.

"Third-quarter financial performance was driven by solid 8-per-cent revenue growth over the previous quarter and a modest 3 per cent increase in operating expenses," Microcell said in a statement.

The company has made "consistent progress in its march toward profitability this year," said chief executive Andre Tremblay. "EBITDA (earnings before taxes and certain costs) improved a further $4.8 million in the quarter, due in large part to continued cost control.

"We are successfully keeping our operating costs in check against the backdrop of rapid customer expansion, while further developing our wireless data and mobile Internet strategies."

Microcell acquired 65,134 new retail customers in the third quarter, representing an estimated 23-per-cent market share of total new Canadian wireless net additions in regions where Fido cell phones are offered.

The company said its retail wireless customer base has expanded 35 per cent in the first nine months this year to 787,873 subscribers.

✦ ✦ ✦

Third-quarter earnings fell sharply at **Teleglobe Inc.,** the international telecom-services provider recently acquired by **BCE Inc.** for $7.6 billion.

Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization totaled $12 million U.S., compared with $50 million a year earlier, BCE said yesterday in a release that did not report Teleglobe's net earnings.

Beginning in the fourth quarter, BCE will include results for Teleglobe and subsidiary **Excel Communications** in BCE's financial results.

Teleglobe revenues in the third quarter ended Sept. 30 were $338 million U.S., down from $339 million. But data and Internet services revenues reached $95 million, a 56 per cent increase.

Teleglobe also announced yesterday its plans to build eight global Internet Data Centres in 2001– in Frankfurt, London, Miami, New York, Tokyo, San Francisco, Toronto and Washington, D.C.

Excel's revenues were $267 million U.S. in the quarter, down from $362 million.

NOTICE OF DIVIDEND RATE

BCE Inc. will, on December 1, 2000, issue Cumulative Redeemable First Preferred Shares, Series R (the "Series R Preferred Shares") if holders of at least one million of its Cumulative Redeemable First Preferred Shares, Series Q elect to convert such shares into Series R Preferred Shares. In such a case, as of December 1, 2000, the Series R Preferred Shares will pay, on a quarterly basis, as and when declared by the Board of Directors of BCE Inc., a fixed cash dividend for the following five years that will be based on a fixed rate equal to the product of: (a) the average of the yields to maturity compounded semi-annually, computed on November 10, 2000 by TD Securities Inc. and Scotia Capital Inc., that would be carried by Government of Canada bonds with a 5-year maturity (the "Government of Canada Yield"), multiplied by (b) a percentage rate determined by BCE Inc. (the "Selected Percentage Rate").

The "Selected Percentage Rate" determined by BCE Inc. is 103.5%. The "Government of Canada Yield" is 5.965%. **Accordingly, the annual dividend rate applicable to the Series R Preferred Shares for the period of five years beginning on December 1, 2000 will be: 6.174%.**

Marc J. Ryan
Corporate Secretary
BCE Inc.

JAF
Men's Wear
Top Quality At Wholesale Prices
Polo & Mock Neck Sweaters (made in Italy) reg. 85.00 $40
Suits $150 to $650
Wool Sport Jackets Starting from $100
•Taxes Included •Free On-the-spot Alterations
•Large selection of men's suits and accessories at wholesale prices.
900 Décarie, Ville St-Laurent Tel: 744-0985
Hours: Mon. to Wed., 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. • Thurs. & Fri., 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
• Sat., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. • Sun., Noon to 4 p.m.
Elite Vests

DUNDEE SECURITIES CORPORATION
PRESENTS... BRIAN COSTELLO
INVESTING FOR THE MILLENIUM - POSITIONING YOUR INVESTMENTS FOR MAXIMUM GROWTH
BRIAN COSTELLO
Financial Expert
Join Brian and learn how Mutual Funds strategies can help you:
• Profit from market volatility
• Remove money from your RRSP or RRIF mutual funds tax-free
• Protect all of your investments from taxes using Estate Planning
• Create RRSP or RRIF strategies that work
Presented by: DUNDEE SECURITIES CORPORATION
A Dundee Wealth Management Company
Pointe Claire Branch
Dundee Securities Corporation
Member: CIPF & IDA
Co-Sponsored by: Fidelity Investments Canada
Free Seminar – Please join us!
Wednesday, November 15, 7:30 p.m.
Holiday Inn, Pointe Claire
(Trans-Canada Highway, Pointe Claire)
Limited Seating.
To reserve your free seats today, CALL
(514) 866-2244 (24hrs)

Notice of Meeting
of the holders of
MTT
an Aliant company
First Mortgage Bonds
10.95% Series AB due December 15, 2005
10.25% Series AC due August 1, 2006
10.45% Series AD due March 1, 2013
to be held on December 15, 2000
at the offices of
Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP
Suite 2300 Commerce Court West, Toronto, Ontario
At 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time
For the following purposes:
For additional information you may contact
Aliant Inc. Investor Relations at 1-877-248-3113

NEW BEETLE 2000
BRAND NEW, 5 SPEED, A/C, YELLOW/BLACK
SPECIAL
Popular MONTREAL
8441 St-Hubert
Tel: 514-274-6471

CANADIAN SECURITY AGENCY
"Security Above All Else"
www.csasecurity.com
• Investigation Ex- Theft & Work Related Accident
• Surveillance & Patrol
• Honesty Shopping
• Store Detective
• Uniformed Guards
• Pre-Employment Screening
• Labour Disputes
• Bar Doorman Services
SPECIAL SERVICES
• Executive Protection
• Helicopter (Support)
• Electronic Surveillance
• Internal Theft & Sabotage Prevention
• Polygraph
• Alarms, Cctv.
Smith & Wesson
• CORPORATE • INDUSTRIAL • RESIDENTIAL
4480 COTE DE LIESSE, MONTREAL, H4N 2R1
738-3321

RATES GUARANTEED FOR 10 YEARS
Starting at 5.50% the first year
Up to 7.00% the year 10
Looking to diversify your investments?
1% interest 1/0 bonus the first year for new RRSP funds
1 800 463-5229
For the Québec City region: call 521-5229
Placements Québec Step-up Bonds are a smart solution for balancing your portfolio. They offer very attractive step-up rates guaranteed for 10 years. Your capital is also guaranteed without limit by the Québec government. In addition, they allow you to benefit from future increases in interest rates since they are redeemable each year on their anniversary. For a well-informed answer, call one of our investment officers Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Saturdays during October and November from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Placements Québec. The answer to all your investment needs.
PLACEMENTS QUÉBEC STEP-UP BONDS
Québec
Placements Québec

Copyright © 2026 Newspapers.com. All Rights Reserved.